



# GROUNDCOVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

MARCH 2017 VOLUME 8 ISSUE 3

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## Indivisible – standing together for inclusion, tolerance and fairness



by Susan Beckett  
Publisher

We seem to be careening down a path of divisiveness. Britain is breaking away from the European Union; China, Russia and North Korea are openly challenging their neighbors; and, in the United States, liberals are obstructing President Trump's agenda and nominees with the same fervor that conservatives displayed in opposing President Obama's every move. It makes me very uncomfortable, like something unhealthy is rooting in the pit of my stomach.

So when one of the Groundcover News vendors pointed out to me the **Indivisible** sign on a downtown store window,

### GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

*Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.*

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I felt drawn to it. **Indivisible** – a word echoed in the Pledge of Allegiance that is emphasized before proceeding to "with liberty and justice for all."

I realized then that I have been yearning for a movement to build unity and shared problem-solving. Demonizing those who disagree has left us with a level of distrust and polarization that I find personally and nationally unhealthy.

On a recent tele-town hall call with my Congressman, Tim Walberg, new perspectives were shared with me. Among those who got to speak was a married woman from a small town who wanted to talk about the Affordable Care Act. She expressed gratitude that the Congressman was working to replace Obamacare. (This is a common position among conservatives and one over which there is much fighting between political parties.) But as I listened to her reasoning, it became apparent that the problem for her was one of stigma, something I had not previously considered myself or heard in the public discourse.

This couple had taken pride in being independent and taking care of their own needs, and she was now embarrassed that she and her husband could no longer afford insurance without utilizing the Obamacare subsidies. (Some families and communities consider it shameful to avail oneself of safety net programs.) It eroded her self-image. She freely acknowledged that her resulting insurance was much better than the bare-bones, high-deductible policy she could no longer get because it did not meet the minimum standards of the Affordable Care Act.

She expressed concern that even the Obamacare premiums were rising. But what really devastated her was that she couldn't add their 24-year-old daughter to their policy because the daughter qualified for Medicaid. Even though their daughter would be getting a good policy at no cost, she was shattered that someone in their family would be taking a government handout intended for the poor and infirm.

Her pain was real but easily lost in the ranting of each side against the other. There are many logical responses, too. But without empathy and acknowledgement of the validity of her life experiences, solutions that resolve the pain will prove elusive.

I think this underlies some of the frustration in the Black Lives Matter movement, too. The experience of much

of white America is so different from black Americans that only the surface problems are apparent and addressed.

Conflicting ideals need to be balanced; we all want to be safe and we all want freedom but letting everyone do what they want clashes with maintaining a safe and orderly community. Similarly, an anything-goes environment is great for entrepreneurship but risks public safety and protections for workers. We need compassion and a deep understanding of each other to reach the best possible compromises, and mutual trust so everyone is open to adjusting the terms as the circumstances evolve.

Exploitation, politics, racism, fear and oppression separate us and reduce us to stereotypes, and our conversations to sound bites. If we are to thrive, all of us must feel safe and valued. Each of us must take the initiative to have non-

confrontational, personal conversations with people we meet who don't share our politics – not about the news of the day but about the pain points in their lives and policy changes that might ease them. With compassion and meaningful dialogue, we can work together to make us all stronger, individually and as a nation.

### Groundcover News Volunteer Meeting

#### ALL ARE WELCOME

Saturday, March 18  
3:00 pm

Basement Level of  
Bethlehem UCC  
423 S. 4th Ave  
Ann Arbor, MI

### Washtenaw County Meals on Wheels & Senior Café Program Locations



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**Ypsilanti Senior Center**, 1015 Congress Street (734)483-5014  
**Ypsilanti, Township Community Center**, 2025 E. Clark (734)544-3838

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**Marti Lachapell** at [lachapellm@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:lachapellm@ewashtenaw.org)

## Blessed spaciousness



by Rev. Dr. Martha  
Brunell  
Groundcover  
Contributor

Earlier this winter I missed Wilma's usual "light report." She is a retired dean and professor who spent scores of working hours inside for decades. She is also an avid gardener who relishes the quantity of outside time her life now allows. It is her habit, as January gives way to February, to report at church precisely how many minutes of afternoon light we have regained since the winter solstice.

She was home with a nagging respiratory illness at the time when she would have voiced her 2017 annual light report. Even those of us who don't struggle with winter's lessening light thrill at the evidence of returning spaciousness when she announces the exact numbers. Days grow larger right then and there.

Spaciousness courses through topography as well as light. I remember standing on the Michigan side of Lake Michigan in September, 2005. It was the eve of the fall equinox, and I was borrowing a friend's cottage for writing and healing time in the wake of a substantial loss. It was a bright, sunny, windy afternoon with patches of light dancing across the wide expanse of water. On the shore of that great lake, I heard the invitation to set down the multiple burdens of responsibility I carried and allow myself to be right-sized in the scheme of things, not too big and not too small. I faced beautiful, powerful and spacious water that would be there no matter what I did.

Each day I now have a similar experience where I live – broad prairie land

with its unblocked sky overhead. Like Lake Michigan, it exists with or without me. It quietly suggests I be mindful of balance and health by not attempting to bear more than a reasonable load. I feel well on this land, neither super-sized nor diminished.

I enjoyed a different encounter with spaciousness while visiting friends on the Gulf shore of Florida in January. It was a first, that warm week of winter vacation. I've long prided myself on being a sturdy northerner who truly enjoys "real winter." But Florida's shoreline combination of color and warmth coaxed me outside daily from dawn onward. What a relief it was after closed-in, monochromatic winter days that I know well. For the first time I could imagine why people trekked to Florida or other warmer places year after year.

Another great friend of spaciousness is humor. In the winter of 2003 one of my hospice patients was a 40-year-old with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). His disease and deterioration were advancing rapidly. He was so sad about his impending absence from the life of his three-year-old daughter. One day over the winter holidays when all four of her grandparents were visiting with her mom and dad, she got into a low cupboard in her parents' easily accessible bathroom. No one noticed what she was up to. A box of her mother's mini-pads so resembled feet that she carried them carefully into the kitchen and firmly stuck them down, forming an interesting pathway across the hardwood floor. It was hours before the adults in the house gently scraped

up every bit of the adhesive from the floor. It was days before they stopped laughing about her improvised kitchen pathway. What a spacious relief that laughter was in the face of ALS' cruel limitations that continued to shrink life.

Just this week, I stumbled upon an online clip of Danish television called "All That We Share." People arrived in a plain room where the floor was covered with boxes outlined in white tape.

People located themselves as us and them, the higher ones and those just getting by, those we trust and those we try to avoid, people from the countryside and people who

have never seen a cow, the new Danes and those who've always been here, the religious and the self-confident, those we share something with and those we don't share anything with. Then new groups of various sizes formed one after another – class clowns, stepparents, the bullies, those bullied, the lonely, those

who believe in life after death, those who have seen UFOs, any who love to dance, the broken-hearted, those madly in love, bisexuals, those who acknowledge the courage of others, those who have found the meaning of life, those who have saved lives, and finally all who love Denmark. It was a spacious delight, that three-minute clip of people repositioning themselves and coming side by side.

We don't manage spaciousness. It is a gift that enriches, opens out, connects and spills forth.

Philip Martin has written about the potential impact of spaciousness. His words are these:

*In trying to control everything we make our world smaller. Instead we can open into a larger world where we are not in charge, but are a part of something much larger – more deeply wondrous.*

May this month be filled with the spacious and the wondrous for you, for me, for all of us.

## "In trying to control everything we make our world smaller."

– Philip Martin

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## Access to justice – we are all entitled to constitutional protections

by Angie Martell  
Groundcover Contributor

*Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. – Martin Luther King, Jr.*

“Equal justice under law” is a promise in our Constitution that is vital to not only our judicial system but also to how we operate as a nation and society. Justice is a social contract we created and agreed upon – it is not to be changed on a whim.

Access to justice is not just access for some and not others. It is more than improving an individual’s access to courts or guaranteeing legal representation. It is about living up to one of the core ideals of this nation: “with liberty and equality for all.”

Access to justice is the ability of people to seek and obtain a legal remedy through formal or informal institutions. Fairness starts with access. Justice depends on having a fair chance to be heard regardless of who you are, how you got here, where you live or your financial situation. Access to justice is not solely closing the legal services gap, it’s about changing the way we perceive laws, how laws are implemented and how they operate. The highest purpose of laws is to preserve freedom, to maintain order, resolve disputes and to protect liberties and rights from violations or unreasonable intrusions by persons, organizations or government. Justice is not allowing people to plead guilty when they are coerced to by heavy-handed prosecutors. Justice is presuming everyone innocent until proven guilty.

We are all potential warriors and guardians for justice – as guardians, protect-

ing the rule of law from encroachment and, as warriors, moving the law forward and preventing injustice by protecting the health and strength of our democracy and the principles of equality.

Attacks on black, indigenous, Muslim, LGBTQ, immigrant, disabled and poor communities are now carried out in broad daylight. Fortunately, communities of resistance have mobilized in response to the numerous recent Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE) raids throughout the nation; people across the country and around the world have marched wearing pink hats in support of women’s rights; people have been present and demonstrating in airports around the nation, and the resistance towards injustice is growing.

### What can we do?

We can continue to be agents of hope. We can continue to build bridges and search for common ground. We can continue to expose lies and seek truth. We can continue to protect our democracy and the laws that protect the most vulnerable.

### What are our best tools?

Knowledge is empowerment – work together and disseminate the knowledge.

Become active in your communities or social justice organizations.

If you see something, say something. Now more than ever before we need to help those under attack, to hold accountable those who create injustice.

Check for alerts in your area, especially regarding ICE raids in courts, workplaces and schools, and inform those at risk.

### Warrants

If police or immigration agents come to your home, you do not have to let them in unless they have certain kinds of warrants. Ask the officer to slip the warrant under the door or hold it up to the window so that you can inspect it. Don’t let kids open the door. A search warrant allows police to enter the address listed on the warrant, but officers can only search the areas in the warrant and for the items listed. An arrest warrant allows the police to enter the home of the person listed on the warrant if they believe the person is inside. A warrant of removal/deportation does not allow officers to enter a home without consent.

### Immigration detention

If you are detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), you have the right to a lawyer but the government does not have to provide one for you. If you do not have a lawyer, ask for a list of free or low-cost legal services. You have the right to contact your consulate. Tell ICE you wish to remain silent. Do not sign anything such as a voluntary departure or stipulated removal without talking to a lawyer. If you sign you may be giving up your opportunity to try to stay in the U.S.

If you see something, say something. Have an ACLU know-your-rights wallet card. These can be found at the ACLU website.

**Immigration raids – what to do if you or someone you know is stopped by the police, immigration agents, or the FBI**

### Your rights:

- You have the right to remain silent. You do not have to discuss your immigration or citizenship status. However, separate rules apply at international borders and airports or for individuals on certain nonimmigrant visas, including tourist and business travelers.
- You have the right to refuse to consent to a search of yourself, your car or your home.
- You have the right to a lawyer if you are arrested.
- Regardless of your immigration status, you have constitutional rights.

### Your responsibilities:

- Stay calm and be polite. Don’t argue, resist or run, and keep your hands where police can see them.
- Do not interfere with or obstruct the police.
- Ask if you are free to leave and, if you are under arrest, ask why.
- Do not lie or give false documents.
- Prepare yourself and your family in case you are arrested.
- File a written complaint or call your local ACLU if you feel your rights have been violated.

Report incidents of hate speech or bias to the ACLU and local law enforcement.

Volunteer with the ACLU as an advocate for State Legislature issues.

Mentor and provide leadership to youth. Youth are the most vulnerable of all right now. Some youth feel hopeless about the world that they are inheriting.

This is not the first time we have faced

oppression in the United States. Our nation, though young in age, has had a very difficult history of racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, and genocide of indigenous people. It is in times like this that we must stand together and help each other out of the darkness and provide the light that shines and becomes the beacon of freedom and equality for all our people – not for a small few.



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## I voted for Trump – an eleventh-hour decision

by Elizabeth “Lit” Kurtz  
Groundcover Vendor #159

I decided to vote for Trump when I had an eleventh-hour epiphany of what he meant by saying he wanted to “Make America Great Again.” It slowly dawned on me that as a homeless individual I shared something in common with then-candidate Trump, each demonized in our own way by the mainstream media to the extent that people only spoke of us in the most horrible tones and expressions without always hearing what we actually had to say.

I also quickly became aware that Trump, as a business person, would never speak in the nicely-coined, politically-correct terms that we have come to expect from our politicians; and while his harsh, insulting tones sounded demoralizing, that he had the best interests of all Americans in mind.

So being undaunted by the media portrayals of Trump, his November victory came as little surprise to me. Having lived on the streets for over three years made me keenly aware of the stories that go untold by mainstream media and that there was a growing body of us who felt left out of the American experience. Even before living on the fringes, I began to have a vague sense of uneasiness with the Democratic platform, but continued to support it because it was somehow embedded in the black voting

tradition. While I had heard the arguments about liberal Democrats taking the minority vote for granted, I still remained a staunch Democrat for most of my adult life.

But now as a homeless American, I am more aware the difference between pacification and authentic remedies for my plight. I have felt the sting of resentment from others when I acted outside the stereotypes associated with being black, or for that matter, homeless. Through this experience, I further embraced the truth that, as an American, I not only have the right but perhaps even more importantly, the necessity to discern between often inflammatory media reports and what I feel to be the truth. That truth for me meant that only the candidates who give notice to my plight deserved my attention and my vote. I was impressed that as a candidate Mr. Trump felt it to be imperative to end veteran homelessness. I soon realized why veterans across the country supported Trump two-to-one over his opponent, Hilary Clinton.

Perhaps that is why I am encouraged by the sense of inclusion that I felt lacking from the liberal Democratic platform. I am reminded that it was the Republican Party that lifted the behemoth weight of slavery and it seems that we may have come full circle in that it may very well be that same party that addresses and ends the crisis of homelessness which the Democrats seem to have

become resigned to as a fact of life and not a crisis.

Only after his win did I find an ABC-hosted Republican Party primary debate that occurred where Trump declared something that I would have expected to come from his Democratic rivals. On February 6, 2016, President Trump exclaimed: “There will be a certain number of people that will be on the street, dying. And as a Republican, I don’t want that to happen. We’re going to take care of people that are dying on the street!”

Since Mr. Trump has become president, there is nothing that has swayed me from feeling that I made the right choice in casting my vote for him. I am confident that the temporary ban he issued on countries was not exclusively designed for being anti-Muslim; these are the same countries the Obama administration had selected as having terrorist elements. I am also content that President Trump’s policies will continue to give priority to Christians and persecuted Muslims.

The “Make America Great Again” message does nothing to dismantle rights for the LGBT community. It has proposed giving a facelift to upgrade Black History month and seeks to overhaul the long-failing disaster that is the public school system.

Finally, the subsequent women’s march on Washington served to further alienate me and reinforce the idea that I made the right decision. While on the surface these women seemed united, I was aware of the divisiveness within their ranks. My heart sank on that post-inauguration day as woman after woman approached the podium without my voice – that of the street woman – being heard. I also recalled the pain-

ful memory of the time that I was shut down when I attended a “black feminist think tank” and was blatantly told that my voice, the voice of the homeless woman, had no place in their feminist discourse.

As for Hilary Clinton, in my montage of images of her, I am still haunted by her jokingly remarking that she felt “like a homeless person” when she was handed a large crumpled paper bag on the *Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon*. The remark, insensitive and callous, continues to send chills up my spine, making me grateful that she was not chosen to represent my interests.

And yes, I did listen for the Democratic Party to offer even a ray of hope for my current plight. For them to demonstrate that all of the trust I had placed in their party for most of my adult life was merited and that surely they would not abandon me when I had no place to live except the streets. Like the Tracy Chapman lyric, I wanted them to *give me one reason to stay so that I could turn right back around*. It never came.

But as of today, I am highly encouraged that no other election will occur without the voice of the homeless masses being taken into account. That neither party can take our plight for granted and expect to prevail in an election without representing our interests. Whether we are squatters, live on street corners, in cars, under bridges, or in tents we have the right to vote. And it may very well be the homeless vote that determines the direction of this country going forward.

You can follow me on Facebook at “As the Third World in North America Turns” for more discussion and my perspective on the homeless plight in our country.

### *I voted for Trump – Editor’s note*

Clarification of some claims made in the adjacent article:

*The seven countries in the Trump administration’s immigration ban are the same as those the Obama administration had selected as having terrorist elements.*

Obama’s list ultimately included 10 countries who were listed simply as “countries of concern” and bolstered visa requirements for travelers from those countries in order to identify possible radicalization of travelers – not single out those countries’ citizens.

*President Trump’s policies will continue to give priority to Christians and persecuted Muslims.*

The Jan. 27 executive order, which also suspended worldwide refugee entry into the country, implicitly makes an exception for Christian immigrants from these countries, but *not* Muslims, stating it will “prioritize refugee claims made by individuals on the basis of religious-based persecution, provided that the religion of the individual is a minority religion in the individual’s country of nationality” (emphasis ours).



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# BUILDING COMMUNITY

## International Street Paper Vendor Week recap – Groundcover Edition

By all measures, this was our most successful Vendor Week ever. We were honored to have five Celebrity Guest Vendors join us in promoting Groundcover News, we did a studio interview for the Lucy Ann Lance radio show, we had a lovely social hour with our customers, and Mlive.com ran an online article about Vendor Week and Groundcover. As an added treat for our vendors, the University of Michigan student group, Michigan Is My Home, delivered high-quality bags full of self-care items to all the vendors they could find out selling during the week. Many of these students also came to our mixer and got feedback on the bags from the vendors as they got to know one another.

This year's Celebrity Guest Vendors – Ypsilanti Mayor Amanda Edmonds, Ann Arbor City Councilman Jason Frenzel, former University of Michigan and NFL running back Jamie Morris, State Representative Yousef Rabhi and Ann Arbor City Councilman Chuck Warpehoski – proved to be an exceptionally able group of salespeople who our vendors thoroughly enjoyed selling with. Morris's media expertise (he co-hosts a daily sports talk radio show, *The M Zone*) was apparent in his adroit handling of the Mlive.com interview that took place on the street corner. Rabhi so enjoyed talking with his constituents while he told them about Groundcover that he asked if he could do this again before next Vendor Week! (More photos, videos and links can be found on our Facebook page and under the Vendor Week tab on our website.)

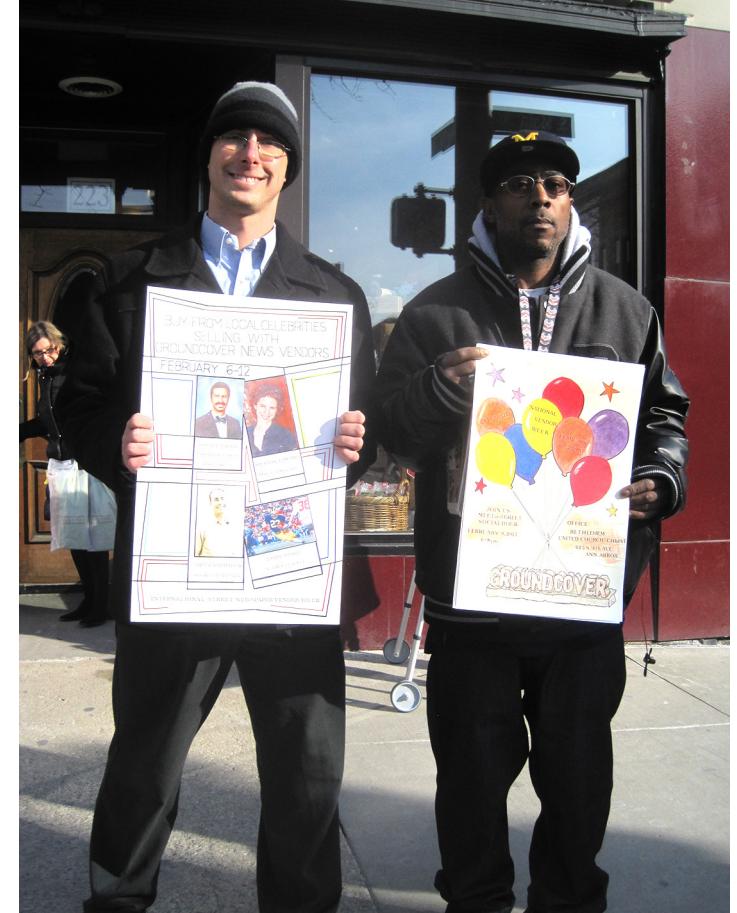


Vendor Week kicked off with Susan Beckett and Elizabeth "Lit" Kurtz talking with Lucy Ann Lance on her WLBY radio show (podcast link on the Groundcover News Facebook page and website). Right: Ann Arbor City Councilman Chuck Warpehoski and vendor Joe Woods displayed Vendor Week posters before selling together on Main St.

International Street Paper Vendor Week was celebrated in different ways around the world. *The Big Issue North*, a UK street paper which has had prominent politicians and public figures as guest vendors in the past, turned to its regular customers for Vendor Week this year. The invitation was accepted by 25 customers. Regular vendors accompanied and mentored them and were rewarded with the sales proceeds garnered by the guest vendors.

Following her experience selling the paper alongside regular vendor Monica, Maxine Peake said, "It was really hard. It was fun though – it was great to spend time with Monica. But people ignoring you and blanking you is a difficult thing, it was quite soul destroying. On the other hand, some people were lovely too."

The staff of the Swiss street paper, *Surprise*, loaded an old VW camper van with vendor stories, chorale performances and alternative city tour descriptions (city tours by vendors that highlight social service providers and places that low-income people congregate rather than the typical tourist sites) and toured Switzerland during Vendor Week. They parked in public places in Basel, Bern and Zurich and drew attention with musical performances. They invited passersby to view the contents of the van and learn more about *Surprise* and the people who sell it. They served soup, tea and cake to van visitors.



There are so many ways to highlight the struggles and contributions of street paper vendors – several papers collaborated on "Uncovered," a Glasgow, Scotland exhibition of the covers of various street newspapers. Whatever the vehicle, vendors appreciate others taking the time to share in a bit of their reality and acknowledge their contributions to society.



A Proud supporter of Groundcover News

**"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."**

(Mt 5:5)

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

**Ash Wednesday, March 1**

Mass at:

7:00 a.m. 9:15 a.m. 12:15 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.

**Thursdays**

**March 2 - 30 Evening Prayer at 7:00 p.m. in church**

**Fridays**

**March 3 - April 7 Mercy Friday**  
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Fish dinner at 5pm  
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**Wednesday, March 29 Coffee & Chat with a Priest**  
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**Thursday, March 16, Consistent Life Ethic (CLE)**  
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## International Street Paper Vendor Week recap – Groundcover Edition



Clockwise from above: Running back and radio personality Jamie Morris did some fancy selling with vendor Tabitha L.; Some folks met State Representative Yousef Rabhi through their regular vendor, Tomicka, while others learned about Groundcover from Rabhi; Ann Arbor Councilman Jason Frenzel and vendor Emanuel R. took a break from selling to receive personal care items from the student group Michigan is My Home; Vendor Lit coached Jamie Morris in making a sale. Front cover: Ypsilanti Mayor and Growing Hope Director Amanda Edmonds helped vendors La Shawn Courtwright (shown) and Mary B. sell to new customers in Ypsilanti.





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**The drugs and sex merry-go-round**  
 as told to La Shawn Courtwright  
 Groundcover Vendor #56

I slept in abandoned properties, and had really bad trench foot. This is something that you get when your feet are always moist or got soaked from the being out in the rain. I begged for food as I walked around.

A person of the same sex offered me money to do sexual favors, and things that had to do with sexuality. I'd then go score some heroin and go to a secluded area and inject my dope. I'd then get sweets to eat. I cleaned myself up a lil' and went out to turn more dates to get high again to forget how hopeless I felt.

I want to work an honest job, but heroin calls me first.

# PUZZLES



Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.



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—

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—

JAMIE & ROBIN AGNEW

## Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

**All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:**

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$2, or the face value of the paper. I agree not to ask for more than face value or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell

to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

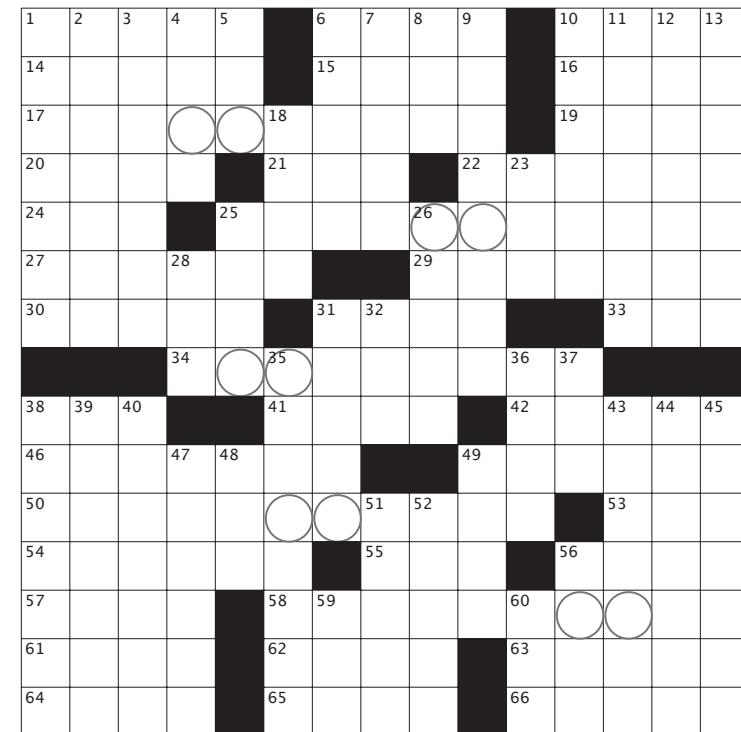
- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to:  
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 734-707-9210

### Places in the Heart Peter A. Collins

#### ACROSS

1. Mothers of Invention head Frank
6. For one
10. Fateful March day
14. Vocally
15. Wang of fashion
16. Trace
17. Red River Valley city
19. Roughly
20. Shaving woe
21. 2016 Olympic setting
22. Remove the slack from
24. "That's disgusting!"
25. City on the Front Range
27. Erudite paper
29. Chrysler Building's style
30. Pricey strings, for short
31. "Mamma Mia" band
33. Falco's " Kommissar"
34. Beaver's home?
38. Where the propeller is, usually
41. Hill worker
42. TSA tools
46. Mining material
49. Newish
50. Setting for the 1979 film "Breaking Away"
53. Parisian pronoun
54. Has a penchant for
55. Conquistador's quest
56. Dirty Harry's org.
57. Gull relative
58. Chicago suburb
61. Morlock victims
62. Indian sightseeing destination
63. "Part of Your World" singer
64. Hall-of-Famer Sandberg
65. Ransack
66. Number of vertices on a truncated icosahedron



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3. Animal sanctuary menace
4. Heavy metal alternative
5. Toss in
6. To have, to René
7. 1992 candidate Ross
8. Sitcom planet
9. Bucolic
10. "Given the chance, yes!"
11. Made filthy
12. Gist
13. Host
18. Some "Hair" hair
23. PC key
25. Dog name meaning "faithful"
26. Monthly bill, for many
28. Biological cavity
31. Like hawks and doves
32. Inferior
35. Like some real numbers
36. "The pot is mine!"
37. Gloomy
38. Judge
39. In spite of the facts
40. Fairway club
43. Streaming option
44. Bead
45. In a mocking manner
47. " Darko" (2001 film)
48. Tsp or oz
49. Secure
51. Big name in action cameras
52. Ice, as a sprain
56. iPhone voice
59. In the past
60. Anatomical tube

#### DOWN

1. Some peanut brittle-and-coconut bars
2. Okay, informally



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Sunday school at 10:15 am  
Fellowship Hour follows each service

**MARCH 2017:**

**March 1** Ash Wednesday - First day of Lent  
6-8 a.m. *Imposition of Ashes, drop in, Chapel*  
12:00 p.m. *Worship Service, Chapel*  
7:00 p.m. *Worship Service, Chapel*

**March 11** German Pretzel Sales, 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.  
\$1 each or \$10 dozen. Call to place your order

**March 12** Spring ahead! Daylight Saving Time begins

**March 31** German Pretzel Sales, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
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## Lessons from \$2 a Day – Living on Almost Nothing in America

by Susan Beckett

The big take-away from “\$2 a Day – Living on Almost Nothing in America,” a February 7, 2017 author lecture held at Rackham Auditorium centering around the critically-acclaimed book by the same title, is that the lives of minimum-wage and self-employed low-income workers are so fragile, and the safety nets are so porous, that a single setback – no gas to get to work one day – can plunge a family into unemployment, deep poverty and even homelessness.

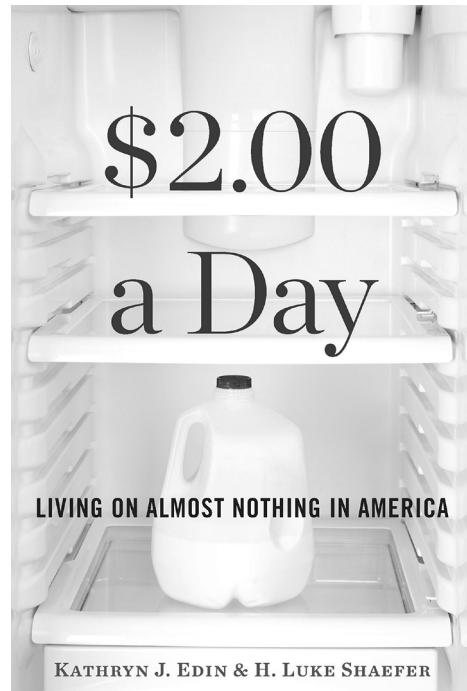
This “Washtenaw Reads 2017” book was co-authored by University of Michigan (U-M) Associate Professor Luke Shaefer, who is also the director of Poverty Solutions at U-M. He and co-author Kathryn Edin, a sociologist from Johns Hopkins University, treated their Rackham audience to postscripts and outtakes from the book. Some of these are expected to make it into the documentary based on their work that will soon start production.

The stories told in the book are of families with dependent children, mostly headed by single women. Rae’s story was one of the most compelling and, fortunately, the authors reunited with her after the book was published and were able to continue her story.

Rae is a single woman with a young daughter. She lives in Cleveland and, for a while, had a living arrangement that allowed her to support her family. She worked at a suburban Walmart where she was named Cashier of the Month twice during the six months she worked there. She treasured the order and sense of control it brought to her life almost as much as the income.

Rae and her daughter roomed near the stockyards in a large house that had been stripped by scappers of its copper plumbing and all but one electrical outlet when the house was abandoned. It then came into the possession of “Uncle George.” Other occupants included George’s wife, an infirm man on disability and an elderly couple on Social Security. Everyone turned over their checks and benefits to George and, in return, he provided food, shelter and necessities for the household. As part of the arrangement, George let Rae use the truck to get back and forth to work during the week and he and his wife babysat Rae’s two-year old daughter, Azara.

Rae filled up the truck on Fridays after work. One Monday she couldn’t get the truck to start. George had run errands all weekend and used up all the gas and all the cash. Left with no way to get to work, Rae called her boss and asked for leniency and support but she was told



that if she couldn’t get to work that day she shouldn’t bother coming back at all. Living in a cash-poor neighborhood, Rae could not muster the money for gas and lost her job.

Unable to find another job, Rae’s life quickly devolved. A year or so later, Shaefer ran into Rae on the streets of Cleveland and took the opportunity to catch up. She told him that she and Azara had run out of food and she was trying desperately to find a food bank that would help.

Shaefer decided to take an hour and find one for her. He called 211, the social service emergency number, and got a list of area food banks. The first pantry he called put him on hold for eight minutes and then went to voicemail. The call to the next food pantry went directly to voicemail with a message to call back later as they were too overwhelmed to return calls. Despite calling with a full stomach from his comfortable office, Shaefer experienced that feeling – familiar to those seeking assistance – that you’re all alone and nobody cares. He remarked that social rejection triggers the same reaction as physical pain, like you’ve been punched in the gut.

That was how Maria, another person interviewed by the authors, felt after her encounter with one of those Cleveland food pantries – an encounter that did not make the book. She hadn’t eaten for four days and waited with José and a friend for the pantry to open. Life had been very tough since José was laid off from his job and they lost the car. Consequently Maria could also no longer get to her job as a maid.

Living in shelters, they had to ship their children off to live with distant relatives. They were finally able to get a small place but only José’s name could be on the lease since Maria had been

previously evicted from an apartment. Because she could not prove residency in the neighborhood, Maria was turned away from the food pantry and the prepared meal she had been smelling for hours.

Another story not found in the book chronicles the travails of Monique, a single mother of two struggling to keep her children safe. She and her kids lived in Birmingham, Alabama with her grandfather. But when a drive-by shooting sent bullets through the house, one of which singed her ear, she felt they needed a safer location. She found a shelter in Chattanooga, Tennessee that had a spot available for her and the children so she packed them up with their belongings and headed north.

However, the room had been taken by the time they arrived. Assured that a spot would open up the next night, Monique dipped into her savings for meals and wrote a check for the \$80-per-night hotel, although she knew she did not have enough left in the account to cover it. The hotel determined there were insufficient funds and called the police.

Monique met the officers at the front desk when called by the clerk and, when told she would have to come to the police station to straighten things out, she had to decide quickly whether or not to let them know about the children who were watching cartoons back in the room. Afraid of losing them to the foster care system she grew up in, Monique remained silent and hoped the kids would, too.

One child started crying while she was gone and the police returned and took the children away. Monique did manage to get a job and a year later got her kids back. Having had enough of Chattanooga, she relocated to Johnsonville where she worked for a McDonald’s. One day she noticed her check was short and inquired about it. She learned that her wages were being garnished by the state of Tennessee to pay for the foster care expenses (plus 15 percent compounded interest) incurred on behalf of her children. With the reduced pay, she was unable to provide for her family.

The authors used the story of the Johnson family, told in the book, to help answer the audience question of what can be done to help these families out of the quagmires in which they’ve been trapped. Travis Johnson was a scrapper – finding and selling metal – until his truck was impounded for expired license plates. Jessica, his wife, sold her plasma twice each week, the maximum allowed. (They would not accept Travis’s plasma because of his many tattoos.)

An interesting point made in the lecture is that the United States is the only country that allows plasma to be sold and it is exported all over the world in a \$35.5 million for-profit business. The plasma donation centers are usually located near bus stations and Department of Human Services buildings (where people go to apply for benefits). One could say we are literally bleeding our poor dry.

The Johnsons scrimped and borrowed all they could and Travis went to buy plates. It turned out he was still \$25 short. The woman in line behind him said, “God told me to give you this,” and handed him \$100.

He gratefully bought the plates and headed home. The truck broke down on the way and he needed a \$200 part to fix it. With no food at home and in debt to everyone he knew, Travis could not come up with the cash for the part. Consequently, he sold the truck for scrap, leaving him no means for earning money.

Shaefer used these stories to illustrate the need for emergency funds that families can tap into to avoid falling off the cliff, as the Johnsons and Rae McClellan did when faced with the need for relatively small amounts of cash. The alternatives are often illegal, such as selling SNAP benefits (the replacement for food stamps) at a discount – which leaves the family with no food – or exchanging sexual favors for money.

Edin and Shaefer also found that the people they encountered wanted to work – they would consider themselves fortunate and satisfied if they could find a steady \$12 per hour, 40 hour per week job. The authors say the best solution would be jobs for those who want to work and a cash safety net for those who don’t or can’t. The barriers to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) have become so onerous that most people in the poorest neighborhoods do not even believe the program is still in effect. Shaefer and Edin said that instead of helping desperately poor families, a portion of the Michigan TANF money goes toward scholarships for kids in middle-income families. Since the demise of Welfare and inception of TANF, poverty has more than doubled. Only SNAP has kept widespread malnutrition at bay.

Shaefer will have the opportunity to test out his hypothesis about the stabilizing effect of employment through research being undertaken at the U-M Poverty Solutions initiative. Expect to hear more about this as the research projects proceed and the \$2 a Day – Living on Almost Nothing in America documentary takes shape.

## Community members educate themselves on reforming sex offender laws

by Sheri Wander  
Groundcover Contributor

Seven individuals from the local group Citizens for Justice traveled to Atlanta, Georgia on September 16, 2016 and participated with several hundred people from across the county in the national Reform Sex Offender Laws (RSOL) Conference. RSOL is a national organization that envisions effective, fact-based sex-offense laws and policies that promote public safety, safeguard civil liberties, honor human dignity, and offer holistic prevention, healing and restoration.

The conference brought together lawyers, academics and researchers, mental health professionals, registered citizens and people impacted by current sex offender registration laws. Workshops

ranged from practical advice for registered citizens and their families, such as "Starting Your Own Business" or "What to Expect upon Release: Parole, Probation and SORA," to those designed to help us be better educators and advocates,

such as "Bill Analysis and Issue Identification" or "Stigma and Status: Researchers and Scholars in the Sex Offender Reform Movement." Workshops, along with key-note speakers and film screenings, centered on the conference theme, "Ending the Fear: Restoring the Constitution."

In one of the keynote addresses, journalist Steven Yoder reflected on "Five Arguments for Registries and Why they are Wrong." Among the claims

he examined is the common misconception that recidivism rates among offenders is frighteningly high. Facts do not bear this out. According to Yoder's research, we have more than 20 years of solid data showing that recidivism rates among registered citizens for sex crimes is lower than re-offense rates for nearly every other population of ex-offenders for the crime that landed them in jail. Although the recidivism rate for sex crimes varies some from study to study, Yoder asserts that overall it is less than five percent. Yoder noted that quoting a high recidivism rate among registered citizens using general recidivism instead of sex crime recidivism is a distortion, as the public registries create obstacles to housing and employment as well as the massive challenges in keeping in compliance with sex offender registration laws that lead to other non-sex-related infractions.

**"Although the recidivism rate for sex crimes varies some from study to study, Yoder asserts that overall it is less than five percent."**

Another talk was entitled "The Emperor Has No Clothes" because sex offender registration is built on assumptions that prove to be unfounded or are outright

lies. Craig Bennet Hallenstein, the presenter, is a psychologist and writer. The research he did while writing the fictional mystery *The Dolphin* led him to discover the injustices of registration. He spoke about lies and misconceptions such as "registries keep kids safe," when there is not one single study that supports this statement. He also spoke on the difficulty but importance for individuals to "come out of the closet" as registered citizens and acknowledge they are on the sex offender registry so

the public realizes that the registrants include family members and others they know and have positive relationships with. The current lack of familiarity promotes ignorance and fear.

With six main speakers, 17 workshops, and two educational films, there is simply no way to put in one article even a small part of the information presented at the conference. Those interested in learning more can view notes from the conference and videos of some of the presentations at <http://nationalrsol.org/?s=2016+conference>.

Plans are already underway for the 2017 conference, which will be held June 2-4 in Atlanta, Georgia again.

The Washtenaw Chapter of Michigan Citizens for Justice, A peer-led support and advocacy group for individuals convicted of a sex offense, their families, and their friends meets the second Saturday of each month from 3:15-5:15 p.m. For meeting location and directions, email Sheri Wander at [playfullspirit@gmail.com](mailto:playfullspirit@gmail.com).

## Focus on the positive



by Kevin Spangler  
Groundcover Vendor #307

Boober tours is developing a strategy to impact the country, world and universe. The plan is to use what I have been researching to help people without them knowing that they are being helped on a grand scale. Boober tours believes that to make major change in the universe is to affect each individual.

We as a society and culture need to raise the Vibration that we send out. We are all connected, even the thoughts that you think no one knows because they are in your head. We are developing an app that will bring people to work together and encourage each other to focus on the positives in the lives of each and everyone around us. When we start making these changes we start opening up to endless possibilities.

My Boober update: I gave my first PowerPoint presentation to Optimize, an entrepreneurial group with the University of Michigan. It was awesome to do and in their feedback they gave me a few things to work on. Boober Tours is trying to raise money for an application we want to develop that will bring people together, and I am working on a pitch deck presentation to show investors. I have been learning and teaching myself a lot and building off all this information I have consumed.

It does not matter who our leaders are; it matters who we are. We need to stop focusing on the negative and, instead, spend all of our energy on the positives in our lives and build from there. I believe we need to start asking ourselves better questions. One being: what value can we create for our family, our community, and ourselves? I am asking for this money to invest in a value-creating business that focuses not on how much money is going to be made but on the value created for society as a whole. Now I am aggressively hiring to prepare to fill all of the cabs Boober Tours has for the spring.

(Speaking of things to celebrate: my son, Romando, turned one on January 30. We had his party at my shop – it was so much fun bringing the family together!)

## April fools – selling the con

by Susan Beckett

The advent of spring holds special significance for the pranksters of the world. Those of you who just groaned, read on.

Creative pranking is the training ground for future marketing and sales professionals. They draw you in with an inviting pitch, set you to salivating with enticing descriptions and then pull the rug out from under you. And if it's done well, you leave in a good mood even knowing you've been had.

My brother-in-law, Jeff, became a masterful prankster as a child. One summer he made it a habit to hide in the used clothing donation receptacle. The thud of each parcel dropping was followed by his low-pitched "Thank you" and the head of the donor then peering through the slot, searching for the source of the voice and peals of laughter when he was discovered.

Those endless pranks turned out to be good training for the business world where he entertains his customers with fanciful models and tall tales. We all need a healthy laugh so, this year, when you bite into the beautiful sundae presented to you and find mashed potatoes instead of ice cream, laugh out loud; indulge and encourage those in your life who want to pour their energy into the perfect April Fool's caper.

## Denial: not just a river in Egypt (Part Two – climate change)

by Martin Stolzenberg  
Groundcover Contributor

*Editor's note: this is the second in a four-part series on major United States industries that are using lawmakers and public relations to thwart needed changes in our country that affect every one of us in order to maximize their profits. Part One dealt with Big Tobacco.*

By climate change, I mean the claim that the recent warming of the Earth is caused primarily by human actions. The wide swings in climate and the terrible storms in recent years have convinced 70 percent of the population that climate change is real.

Yet, those in government largely refuse to take action by withholding money for the study and mitigation of this climatic condition. This is largely because of the lobbying and campaign contributions by the fossil fuel and related industries that have billions at stake in fighting the curtailment of fossil fuel exploration, mining and transport.

Some of the largest public relations companies have now refused to get involved with the climate change deniers. But that has not stopped other firms from stepping in. And, they are using many of the same public relations tactics employed by the tobacco industry.

For example, the 2008 Global Warming Petition Project touted over 31,000 scientist signatories stating that "there is no convincing scientific evidence" for human-caused climate change. The petition, however, neglected to mention that only 0.1 percent of its signatories had a background in climate science.

In contrast, a 2016 meta-analysis of climate studies concluded that "consensus that humans are causing recent global warming is shared by 90-100 percent of publishing climate scientists."

Explaining this disparity in opinion, the *California Governor's Office of Planning & Research* website notes several common traits of climate-deniers:

- They have little or no expertise in climate science. While some have some science background, their training often is unrelated to climate science and they have not published "peer-reviewed" scientific work in climate or atmospheric science.
- They receive funding for their efforts from industries with a financial interest in ignoring climate change. Oil companies, coal-burning electric utilities, and other companies that make their profits from burning fossil fuels have funded denier organizations and scientists, just as tobacco companies funded people who claimed that second-hand smoke was safe.
- A famous tobacco industry document from the late 1960s said, "Doubt is our product, since it is the best means of competing with the 'body of fact' that exists in the minds of the general public." It is a strategy that has worked, at least for a while, in the past, and it is being repeated today.

Where is the money coming from to spread this false information? According to *Scientific American*, between

2003 and 2010 there were almost 100 climate change countermovement organizations receiving \$558 million from so-called philanthropic foundations.

It could be argued that these companies really believe that their activities aren't harmful. It turns out that this, too, is not the case.

Back in 1981, executives at Exxon knew of climate change, seven years before it became a public issue, according to a discovered email from one of the firm's own scientists. It seems that the company was interested in the development of Southeast Asia's biggest potential gas field, off Indonesia. But Exxon scientists warned off the project because of the large amount of CO<sub>2</sub> that would be vented into the atmosphere that would be dangerous to the environment. Despite this, Exxon spent millions over the next 27 years to promote climate denial, according to *Mother Jones*.

Finally, under pressure from shareholders in 2008, ExxonMobil agreed to stop funding climate change denial research. It is the company's public position that the company is committed to acting on the threat posed by global warming. But, it never affirmed human impact on climate change and it still gives money to Congressmen who deny climate change.

ExxonMobil has also continued to fund organizations that fight to block climate change legislation. ExxonMobil and other oil companies have been joined in the fight by the notorious Koch brothers who have enormous fossil fuel property holdings and are a major force in petroleum transportation. Why

not? *Bloomberg News*, in a July 2016 article said that, according to

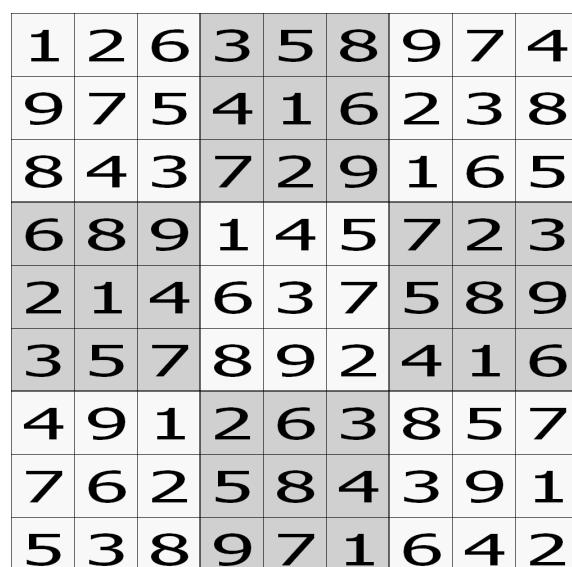
a *Barclays* energy analyst, a fossil fuel business might leave an estimated \$33 trillion worth of product in the ground if forced by climate change concerns to stop production and switch to alternative industries.

Then there are the distinguished Congressmen. According to *Moyers & Company*, as of 2015 over 56 percent of Republicans denied or questioned the science regarding climate change. It's no wonder, since 170 elected officials to the 114th Congress had taken over \$63.8 million collectively from the fossil fuel industry. This conflict of interests prevented the Congress from legislating solutions to curtail climate change.

Before he left office, President Obama used his executive powers to add the United States to the historic 2016 Paris Climate Accord. Also under Obama's direction, the Department of Environmental Affairs mandated coal burning plants to meet more stringent carbon dioxide emissions standards.

It is becoming ever-clearer that President Trump and his pro-corporate administration will strive aggressively to undo the Obama administration's progress on climate change. The appointments of ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson to Secretary of Energy and notorious climate-denier Scott Pruitt to the head of the Environmental Protection Agency are only the most conspicuous signs of a policy turnaround.

However, it must be noted that President Trump stated in a November interview with the *New York Times* that he had an "open mind" on climate change. He ought to. His beloved Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach Florida might be under water in coming years unless something is done soon.



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## Honey-Mustard Chicken Cutlets



by Elizabeth Bauman  
Groundcover Contributor

My friend Charlotte's easy and delicious "go to" chicken recipe – sure to please everyone.

### Ingredients

2 Tablespoons honey  
2 Tablespoons Dijon mustard  
1/3 cup peanuts  
1 cup panko crumbs  
1 lb. chicken breast (about 4 small), pounded to 1/4-inch thick

### Directions

Preheat oven to 500. Lightly grease a shallow baking sheet.

Combine honey and mustard in a small bowl and mix well. Grind peanuts in a food processor until they are the size of tiny pebbles, then combine with panko in a mixing bowl. Brush each cutlet with honey/mustard mixture then dip in panko mix. Place on baking sheet and bake for 8 minutes or until done. Serve immediately.



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### Strange (but Mostly True) Stories About a Mother and her Daughter • Cy Klone © 2017

I must have more scents and newer scents!!!

Wait - what?!? You're still obsessed with the scents he brings in?



Not just those - all smells fascinate me. While I like to learn where he's been, what animals were around and even what his friends smell like, I also find myself racing onto the balcony to smell all the scents of nature springing up.

I still think you're dangerously close to needing professional help.



Why? Because I've created a shrine to his socks? Because of how I roll around in them so joyfully?

Yes, I'm pretty sure those would be some of the first notes in your file.



Hey, religious freedom includes the right to worship at the sock shrine of my choice while thinking profound thoughts. Plus I've caught you rolling in his socks a few times!

And yet I don't pretend my non-stop purring is a sign of any deep spiritual thinking....

